



Brussels, 27th January 2009

The Conference of the European Pari Mutuel Association (EPMA) has related the ongoing initiatives in the gaming and betting sector and put forward the values and benefits of the Pari Mutuel model.

Could the philosophy of the Pari Mutuel model for the funding of horseracing inspire other sports? It is precisely what the operators pointed out during the conference organised in Brussels on 22nd January 2009, a year foreseeing new developments in the gambling sector.

EPMA Chairman, Bertrand Bélinguier, by welcoming more than 100 participants to the conference, reminded them **that 80% of horserace betting worldwide is pari mutuel betting and the European operators have returned € 1.5 billion to the industry of racing and the horse sector in 2008. The sector employs more than 200 000 people in Europe.**

The necessity of funding racing and sport through betting activities was pointed out by Members of the European Parliament and Jacques Toubon (France) and Christel Schaldemose (Denmark) showed the need to put **gambling back on the European political agenda in 2009.**

The initiative report to be voted in March is a strong signal to the European Commission and the Member States to continue the dialogue and exchange good practices. The issue needs transparency, increased knowledge and coherence in order to establish precise rules and efficient controls. The Head of national enquiries in Sweden and France, **Jan Nyren and Bruno Durieux**, showed the necessity to regulate the sector adapting to new technologies while securing consumers and limiting fraud.

Representing the **International Olympic Committee, the CNOSF and the Sport Federations**, Mrs Girard Zappelli and Denis Masseglia assessed the proposal to create a World Agency on Betting and to recognise the Rights of Sport competition organizers, two key elements for sport integrity preservation.

For the Pari Mutuel operators, this gathering with the European decision makers and stakeholders in the gambling sector was essential to point out the major economic and social implications and define common principles to discuss: funding, transparency and integrity of sport competitions.

Programme and speakers presentations are available on: www.epma-conference.net